

**Town of Westford
Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes
March 6, 2006
Cameron Senior Center
Pleasant Street
7:00 P.M.**

The following are the minutes of the March 6, 2006, Town of Westford Parks & Recreation Commission meeting. A permanent set of these minutes (maintained for a period of six years) is retained in the Town Clerk's office. A set of these minutes and a tape recording are retained in the Parks & Recreation Department.

Commissioners Present: Colleen Barisano, Kacy Caviston, Wayne D'Agostino, John Johnson, Carolyn Metcalf, Mary Ellen Tynan

Staff Present: Patricia Savage, Director, Sandra Habe, Asst. Director

Public: Two boy scouts came to observe the meeting.

I. Approval of Agenda (7:10 p.m.)

Carolyn motioned to approve the agenda. Mary Ellen seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 6, 2006

Carolyn motioned to approve the February 6, 2006 minutes. Mary Ellen seconded the motion. John and Colleen abstained from the vote, because they were not at the last meeting.

III. Projects/Tasks

A. East Boston Camps –

a. EBC Master Plan Committee – The committee is finalizing the contract with Bill Giezentanner and Associates. He wants to start in March. He has worked for Audubon. One of the associate has extensive experience working with the public and has some creative ideas for soliciting public input. Sue Morse, the tracker, had a great turnout for her event and found some interesting tracks. 60 to 70 people attended her event. She found red fox, bobcats, fishers and a rare black spruce tree. She will come back in the spring. She said that because the water on the property is so clean the area attracts a wide variety of animals. We need a good management plan for the property to maintain the habitat. She is recommending clearing some trees to open it up to allow berries to grow. The beavers are taking out the best trees. Beavers can be trapped and relocated.

b. Parks & Recreation – Nutting Road

i. Wetlands flagging – Pat and Kacy brought the maps with the wetlands flagged. Steve Erickson, a botanist, flagged the property. Kacy drew in a line to mark the center of the river and then used that line to keep 200' from the center of the river. The plan additionally marks 100' from the

wetlands. The Rivers act requires the buffer. Pat included a 60' buffer from the abutters and used maximum space required for the biggest fields (160' X 360"). A 15' set back is all that is required. There is ample space for parking. According to the current plan (which uses maximum field size and abutter buffers) the plan allows for 360 parking spaces, based on 30 participants 6 sets of parents and 3 games. There is plenty of room for additional parking. Access and egress would be a one way design. We are able to fit 3 fields (2 large fields and 1 smaller field) with parking and adequate space for entering and exiting the facility. The town voted for this property to go to the Parks & Recreation Department for the development of fields.

- ii. Field Development Plan – The planning board will want a professionally drawn plan, perhaps Land Tech can be enlisted. Kacy suggested moving some of the land (soil, etc) to fill the low-lying areas; this would have the effect of lowering the over all fields. The commission can use the current map to draw on fields, to show at neighborhood meetings. The commission would probably want have trees or shrubs planted (donations) to act as a visual barrier. The Commission asked if the aerial photos could be put on the map, as well as examples of the locations of the field.
- iii. Neighborhood Meeting – The commission expects the issues to be lighting, concession, bathrooms and traffic. Pat will obtain an abutters list and send letters about the meeting, as well as posting a public notice for the meeting. We would like to hold the meeting at Stony Brook. The commission would like to hold the meeting the week of March 27th on Monday or Tuesday. The auditorium is the preferred location. We will invite all of the interested parties (Bob Conley, Gus Bickford, Sports Organizations)
- iv. Booster's/Fundraising – no new information

B. Facilities

- a. **Old Highway Garage** – We don't know what is happening to the old highway garage. The new highway garage is supposed to be ready for June or July. The Water Department is still an open issue. The Water Department is still using the building. Depending upon how much of the building will be allotted for Parks & Recreation use it may not be adequate for our use. The department currently uses two rooms at Millenium, the Fairview cemetery building and the eves and storage room at Broadway street.
- b. **VMC (Veterans Memorial Complex)** – The Pro Am Tennis Tournament will be held at the All Season Tennis Club from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 11. Carolyn needs the original plans for the courts to obtain bids to build the courts. She should be able to get them at Town Hall.

- c. **Ice Hockey Rink** – There have been many meetings of the pool and rink people. The Sullivan meeting (Bedford) did not occur because we did not have the spread sheet numbers available. Wayne showed the aerial views that Pat obtained from the internet. There are a lot of wetlands at the Boston Road site. There are 9 usable acres.

Possible locations include:

1. Boston Road - Affordable Housing, Fire Department and the Seniors are all looking at this property.
2. Lavallee Property
3. Route 40 (near the Chelmsford line) - 110 acres for approximately \$4 million.
4. Nashoba Technical High School – they have their own board. They have room to expand, but we do not know how much or if they are interested.
5. CISCO – 90 Acres. Indian burial grounds. There is a person who is considering the property as the site for 3 ice rinks. Wayne suggested that he include a pool.

At today's meeting they are working on the spread sheet numbers to determine if there will be one rink or two and the size of the pool. The Board of Selectman recommended that the pool/rink committee have the spread sheet numbers in addition to a list of Pros and Cons of each location (traffic, septic, etc). After that the committee will gather a list of supporters for the projects. Roseanne Riddick is interested in swimming. The committee is meeting next Monday at 10:00.

We will be working on positive press. A letter to the editor of the Eagle to correct the article that appeared regarding the pool and rink. As a commission we are trying to fulfill the goals of the master plan to provide the town with recreational resources as determined by the survey that the Parks & Recreation department conducted in fall of 2002, results were posted in January of 2003. The survey showed four items that the town's people were most interested in: rectangular field space, trails, a pool and ice rinks.

The Commission has previously sanctioned an ad hoc committee for swim and ice rink. The Commission agreed to have the committee set up as a subcommittee of the Friends of Recreation, who reports to the Parks & Recreation commission. Bob Henning is heading the committee. A big misconception that occurred because of the misinformation in the Eagle article is that the funding will come from town funds. There is the possibility of a public/private partnership.

If the project needs to be split the Lavallee property would be a great location for the pool and a gym facility.

The Commission discussed the reasons for a 50 meter pool. MIT gets \$10,000 per day for their pool. The committee is looking for an 8 lane pool with ample viewing space for fans.

We now have a lot of people working on the pool and rink concept. Valerie Wormell, Selectman, is looking into state owned land. Pat has already received 2 calls from people interested in designing the facility. Pat will give Wayne the phone numbers of anyone who calls regarding the design of the facility.

C. Properties

- a. **Lavallee Venture** – The Board of Selectman have care, custody and control of the property. The Affordable Housing Committee is saying they would like the Lavallee property. Wayne recommended that a letter be drafted requesting the care, custody and control of the property be moved to the Parks & Recreation Department. The Parks & Recreation commission would like to do a feasibility study of the Lavallee property.
Wayne will meet with Dini (Selectman Chair) to talk about the property. The commission agreed to wait until the special town meeting.
Pat will look for the letter that was sent to the Board of Selectman requesting the property be turned over to Parks & Recreation Department.
- b. **Pumpkin Patch** – Pat will talk to Bill Turner about the passive use of the field.
- c. **Tech Park West** – No new information.
- d. **American Legion Playground** – Steve Gomes received the information from Pat and will get back to her.
- e. **Marketing** – Editorial about the Friends of Westford Recreation.
- f. **Rules & Regulations policies and signs** – John will review the signs at the beaches, skate park and fields. Kacy asked about the regulations for pooper scooper. John will check on the pooper scooper law.
- g. **Credit Card Payment** – no new information
- h. **Town Wide Coaches Rules** – no new information

V. Reports/Updates

A. Westford Partnership for Children – everything is fine.

B. Budgets – FY'07 budget. The Board of Selectman is asking the Town Manager not to request a debt exclusion. Our budgets went through.

C. Fields/Parks:

- a. Grounds –no new info.
- b. Structures – Pat would recommend a simple pole structure with canvas for the dugouts. WYBSA need to get approval from the Commission prior to building the dugouts.
- c. Fencing – no new information
- d. Parking – (American Legion parking) – Pat asked Paul Sterret to combine the three suggested plans into one.

D. Comprehensive Town Master Plan – There was a meeting last week, however Pat was not notified of the meeting so she did not attend it.

Pat will find the copy of the master plan and bring them to the next meeting.

VI. Old Business

A. Skate Park – remove from agenda

B. WPC Software – Pat stated that we have lost a year. We will now pursue a new direction.

C. Pesticide Policy – There was a meeting two weeks ago. There is another meeting this Thursday. We believe the committee now understands that what we do on town property is not what might be done on private property. Example we have to get rid of clover on our fields because bees are attracted to it and create a danger.

It would be beneficial to the committee if the School Department attended the meetings.

VII. New Business

A. Annual Report – submitted.

B. CPC – Bruce Freeman Trail – The CPC approved \$20,000 funding to complete a site study of the Westford portion of the trail. It will go before the B.O.S. tomorrow night, although it has already gone before the B.O.S. Beverly Woods and Emily Teller will address any questions, if Ingrid is unable to, at the Town Meeting.

C. Field Permits – Pat met with Bob Conley and Betsy Parke on the youth sports use of the Academy, Blanchard, Stony Brook, Abbot, Robinson, and Veteran's Memorial Complex. The youth sports will go through the Parks & Recreation Department and then Pat will submit the requests to Betsy Parke. Veteran's Memorial (Lacrosse and Baseball) and Blanchard will limit their availability to 3 days/weekdays and one day/weekend. Baseball does not have the same restrictions. The fields as you enter the Stony Brook School are designated as Veterans, the fields behind the school are being called Stony Brook.

Once the Nutting Road property comes on-line we should be able to do some work on the Abbot fields.

D. Heritage Landscape Inventory Program – The application was submitted to the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Wayne signed it. We should hear from them by the end of March.

E. Town Building Committee – Pat will be attending the meeting on Wednesday at 4:00 p.m.

VIII. Adjournment

Carolyn motioned to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. Kacy seconded the motion. Agreed unanimously. Kacy will run the April 3 meeting.